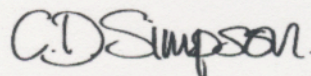


- 1 PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), requires that Local Planning Authorities should protect species and habitats that are of principal importance for the conservation of Biodiversity in England. Priority Habitats, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites should be protected through policies in the Development Plan and ensure the appropriate weight is attached to designated sites and consider the harm to the species or habitats that would result. This has to be considered along with the need and benefits of the development and whether this would clearly outweigh the harm. Priority Habitats are listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as being conservation priorities under threat due to their rarity and rate of decline. The development of this proposal would result in 27% of the Priority Habitat being lost, which, together with the loss of a part of the LoWS is unacceptable. The application has not been accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate that there would be a need and other benefits that would outweigh the harm caused and would clearly be contrary to national policy contained in PPS9.
- 2 The proposal would be contrary to the Basildon Borough PPG17 Open Space Quality Standard adopted in the Basildon Borough PPG17 Open Space Assessment - March 2010 which seeks to preserve its Intrinsic Benefits and enhance its quality.
The development would result in loss of part of a natural and semi-natural green space audited for its contribution to open space in the Borough in 2007. The PPG17 Open Space Assessment seeks to preserve its Intrinsic Benefit as a UK BAP Priority Habitat of principal importance for the conservation of Biodiversity in England and a Local Wildlife Site. As the alternative use would not be able to preserve the Intrinsic Benefit in situ, it fails the PPG17 Assessment tests and would be harmful to the overall appearance and character of the locality.
- 3 The development would be contrary to Saved Policy BAS C1 of the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007 as it would result in the loss of 1ha of a Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS). Policy BAs C1 states that the Council will have regard to the nature conservation value of the site if it affects LoWS (referred to as Sites Important to Nature Conservation "SINCS" in the policy) and other important wildlife habitats.
The site is primarily designated as a LoWS for its reptile populations, although the extent of relatively unimproved unintensively managed grassland is also important. The site is known to support Great Crested and Smooth Newts, Slow Worm, Common Lizards and Adders, making it one of the more important herptile sites in the south of the county, according to Essex Wildlife Trust's ecologists.
Development of this site would therefore result in the loss of part of a UK BAP Priority Habitat of principal importance for the conservation of Biodiversity in England, as well as part of a LoWS specifically designated for its unimproved grassland and reptile populations, which is contrary to this policy and would materially compromise the nature conservation value of the site. Insufficient

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Dated: 12.08.2011



Clive Simpson
Manager of Planning Services